



St. Louis Audubon Society



Tale Feathers

VOLUME 65, NUMBER 2

APRIL 1998

Audubon's Annual Dinner Features Presentation by Regional Vice President

by Tom Day

The annual dinner of the St. Louis Audubon Society will be held at Agusti's Restaurant (on the Hill), 2300 Edwards, on **Thursday, April 23**. (Note change from traditional Friday date.) All members are encouraged to attend. The evening will begin with a cash bar, a time to mingle with new and old acquaintances who share your interest in nature.

Ron Klataske, regional vice president of National Audubon Society, will be our guest speaker. The subject of his presentation will be "Audubon, Perspective in America's Heartland: Prairies, Rivers, and Wildlife." He will also be available to answer questions on the establishment of Audubon Missouri. A brief meeting including the election of new board members will be a part of the evening's activities, along with the presentation of the Conservationist of the Year and the Robert J. Terry Awards.

The cash bar will open at 6:30 pm, and dinner will be served at 7:30 pm. Entree choices include chicken parmigiana or pasta primavera. You should indicate your selection(s) on the **reservation form on page 9**. The cost for the dinner is \$16 per person. Please send your reservation form with a check payable to the St. Louis Audubon Society to Mary Lou Miller, 3927 Lucas & Hunt Road, St. Louis, MO 63121, no later than Friday, April 17.

If you have questions, please call Tom Day at 822-9695 (days) or 962-4064 (evenings).

Special Membership Meeting: Highlights of Birding in Ecuador and Uganda/Update on Columbia Bottoms Status

by Paul Bauer & Jim Holsen

A special membership meeting on Thursday, May 14, at 7:30 pm at the Powder Valley Nature Center will offer a double feature—a presentation of birding adventures in Africa and South America and an update on one of the most important acquisitions in recent years, the transfer of Columbia Bottoms to the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Paul Bauer, an Audubon past president and organizer of our birding walks and international birding trips, will share with us a slide presentation on birding adventures that he has experienced during recent trips to Ecuador, including the Galapagos Islands, and to Uganda. During a brief visit to the Galapagos Islands, we will experience very close encounters with the many types of tame wildlife that have made those islands so famous. On mainland Ecuador we will savor selected locales in the picturesque Andes highlands famous for exceptional birding. In lush green Uganda we will experience a close-up visit with a mountain gorilla family and also witness some of the many birds encountered during visits to several national parks.

In addition, Mike Arduser, regional biologist for the Conservation Department, and Tom Leiffield, area manager for the Columbia Bottoms Conservation Area, will present an update and informal discussion on the Department's plans

for the 4,800-acre tract near the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. Some local organizations have already met with the Department, promoting their own interests. Many Audubon members might prefer to make their first priority the restoration of wetland and wildlife habitat. Maybe you have other ideas. This is an opportunity to make your views known to those who will be deciding how this unique tract is developed.

Mark this date on your calendar and join us for a stimulating evening. Meet us in the auditorium of the Powder Valley Nature Center at 7:30 pm on May 14. The Nature Center is at 11715 Cragwood Road, near the I-44/I-270 intersection. From Watson Road or Big Bend Boulevard, take Geyer Road in Kirkwood to Cragwood Road, on the west side of Geyer, just a few feet north of the Geyer Road bridge over I-44.

Spring is on the Way and So are Migrating Birds

by Jim Malone

April is finally here, and spring is once again upon us. This late winter/early spring season has been surprisingly slow after the mild winter, which hinted at an early migration of several species. But there have been some nice surprises. At Carlyle Lake, a pair of northern saw whet owls has been seen off and on at Hazlett State Park on the west side of the lake. In the same period of time, long-eared owls have been present in a couple of locations on the same side of the lake. Also present near the Governor's Run Golf Course at Carlyle are 3 Eurasian collared doves which seem to be building a nest for the summer.

This spring, the St. Louis Audubon Society will have one birding trip in April, but it has proven to be a great outing in past years. April 18 marks the date for our annual Woodcock/Owl Prowl at Busch Conservation Area. In past years this walk has included views of common loons,

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From Your President

by Jim Holsen

St. Louis Audubon Receives Bequest from Dorothy Boschert

Mrs. Dorothy Boschert, a resident of Ellisville, has left St. Louis Audubon with a bequest of nearly \$56,000. Mrs. Boschert, 76, succumbed to cancer this past summer.

She taught piano, the mandolin, and the accordion for many years. She also worked at retouching and restoring photographs. Survivors include a stepson, Jim Boschert, and a sister, Leotta Benson, both in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Mrs. Boschert's thoughtfulness is much appreciated. A committee will be appointed to recommend how these funds can be used to further Audubon's long-term goals.

Martin Schweig Donates Materials for Archives

Martin Schweig, Jr., a well known St. Louis photographer, gallery owner, and past president of St. Louis Audubon, has presented this organization with a package of birding records and Society documents dating back to 1936 and including records of the 1947 transition of the St. Louis Bird Club to the St. Louis Audubon Society, the first of the now 500 local chapters of the National Audubon Society.

We learn from documents such as these that we cannot really know which of our actions today will be looked upon as important or influential in the future. For instance, one document of interest to us today is a letter dated April 26, 1968, to Martin Schweig from Wayne Kennedy, then St. Louis County Commissioner of Parks. A "recent article in the paper" had reported that the Audubon Society had recorded only 50 different species of birds during a birding walk in Forest Park—at a time approaching the peak of the migration season when many species of warblers and other migrants should have been seen. Wayne

Kennedy pointed out that numerous rare species had been spotted in Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park, and he offered to cosponsor birding walks there, if that would be of interest to the Audubon Society. The best birding areas in Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park are today threatened by the proposed Page Avenue extension, a 10-lane highway across the Missouri River floodplain.

Martin Schweig's gift was in response to an article in the December 1997 newsletter pointing out that Rex Gary Schmidt, a board member who was moving to Farmington, had donated a filing cabinet that would help us to preserve some of Audubon's historical documents.

More recently, Paul Bauer, another past president of St. Louis Audubon and a promoter, along with Jim Malone, of our birding walks, gave us an Audubon newsletter from February 1968 in which Mildred Trotter, a member of the Washington University School of Medicine and also a member of Audubon's board, presented a long document summarizing the activities of Dr. Robert J. Terry (1871-1966), one of the founders in 1914 of the St. Louis Bird Club and later a strong supporter of the St. Louis Audubon Society. It is interesting to be reminded that the St. Louis Bird Club played an influential role in the passage of the International Migratory Bird Treaty, the treaty that protects our migratory song birds. Where would we be without that treaty?

The Society is grateful for these gifts, which will help us to keep in mind the important contributions of the St. Louis Audubon Society and of its predecessor, the St. Louis Bird Club.



Get to Know ... Sara Lenoe

(This is the twenty-second in a series of articles written about and by St. Louis Audubon board members themselves so that all our membership can be better acquainted with our decision makers on the board.)

When an Audubon member asked me if I'd like to serve on the Audubon board of directors, I wondered if he had me mixed up with some other Sara Lenoe. Having never served on a board before, I had the notion that all members of boards of directors were significantly older than I and well established in their communities—serious-faced executive types. I was thrilled to be asked and happily discovered that the Audubon board, while hard-working, is a diverse group which laughs together more than I imagined.

I am a bird-watching zookeeper who is committed to conservation. When I was around 10 years old, our cat killed and brought home to us a small bird with a rust-colored cap. I was sad and full of amazement at its delicateness. Through books I discovered it was an ovenbird, and pretty steadily since, I've been fascinated with birds; friends might even say at times obsessed. (Also, since then I have kept my cats indoors.)

After college I got a volunteer position with the Fish and Wildlife Service working with seabirds in Alaska for a summer. Surrounded by kittiwakes and puffins, I felt I was living in a fantastic dream. Back in St. Louis, I started as a volunteer at the Zoo and eventually got on as a bird keeper, which I have worked as for the past 7 years. Three of those years I spent entirely with the penguins. In 1996 I had the opportunity to spend 2 weeks in Chile working with endangered Humboldt penguins at one of their breeding colonies—another fantastic dream time for me.

Birds and the outdoors in general have had a great importance in my life, and my hope is to contribute something to preserving them.

Tyson Nature Line

Readers are reminded that they can call the Tyson Nature Line at 935-8432 for a recorded summary of recent bird sightings. If you are unfamiliar with the places cited, try looking them up in the book *Birds of the St. Louis Area: Where and When to Find Them*.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Audubon Birding Trips

Bring binoculars, bird field guide, & dress for field conditions & weather. Coaching & instruction for all levels. For confirmation & more information, call trip leaders Paul Bauer (H# 921-3972) or Jim Malone (H# 536-1119).

Woodcock/Owl Prowl at Busch Conservation Area — *Saturday, April 18*, at 6:30 pm. Conducted by Jim Malone. In St. Charles Co. Take Hwy 94 south of US 40, 1 mile to right on Hwy D. Go 1.5 miles to entrance on right. Pass through HQ area & gate to Hampton Lake parking lot. See common loons, early shore-birds, & barred owls, along with woodcocks. Bring flashlight, boots, & dress for weather. See related article on page 1.

Shaw Arboretum — *Saturday, May 2*, at 8 am. Take I-44 west from I-270 to Gray Summit exit. Arboretum is on south side of highway on outer road. Walk is International Migratory Bird Week event; entrance fee is \$3. See related article on page 1.

Kennedy Woods of Forest Park — *Sunday, May 3*, at 8 am. In St. Louis City. Park on street behind Art Museum & meet at edge of woods. Walk is part of International Migratory Bird Week Celebration. See related article on page 1.

Kennedy Woods of Forest Park — *Sunday, May 10*, at 8 am. This walk is also part of International Migratory Bird Week Celebration.

Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, near Jefferson City — *Saturday, May 16*, at 8 am. If you are interested in this day field trip, contact Jim Malone, H# 536-1119, for details & meeting place. This trip is part of International Migratory Bird Week Celebration.

Castlewood State Park — *Saturday, May 23*, at 8 am. Take Big Bend Blvd. west from I-270 for about 6 miles; turn left on Ries Rd. Continue to park entrance & park in lot on right just before stream. See prothonotary, yellow-throated, & cerulean warblers, fish crows, & possibly Mississippi kites & red-shouldered hawks. See related article on page 1.

Audubon-Related Activities

St. Louis Audubon Annual Dinner & Meeting — *Thursday, April 23*, at Agusti's Restaurant. Ron Klataske of NAS will present "Audubon, Perspective in America's Heartland: Prairies, Rivers, & Wildlife." See related article on page 1 & reservation form on page 9.

Audubon Society of Missouri Spring Meeting — *Friday - Sunday, April 24 to 26*, at Mingo National Wildlife Refuge. For more info., call Paul Bauer, H# 921-3972.

Missouri Audubon Council Spring Meeting — *Sunday, April 26*. For more info., call Jim Holsen, H# 822-0410.

Birding Big Day/North American Bird Migration Count — *Saturday, May 9*. For more info. or to participate, call Paul Bauer, H# 921-3972, or Blaine Ulmer, H# 966-5425.

Special Membership Meeting for Adventure Trips & Columbia Bottoms Status — *Thursday, May 14*, at 7:30 pm. Paul Bauer will give slide presentation of past trips to Ecuador & Uganda to show birding & other wildlife highlights for prospective trips. See info. on planned 1998 Audubon-sponsored adventure trips on page 8. Mike Arduser & Tom Leiffield of MO Conservation Dept. will share update & conduct discussion on Columbia Bottoms management plan. Meeting to be held at Powder Valley Nature Center's auditorium. See related article on page 1.

Special Events

1998 North American Ornithological Conference — *Monday - Sunday, April 6 to 12*, in St. Louis. Conference includes annual meetings of American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Colonial Waterbird Society, Cooper Ornithological Society, Wilson Ornithological Society, & special symposium of Raptor Research Foundation. For more info., contact Bette A. Loiselle (ph. 516-6224) or John G. Blake (ph. 516-6578),

Biology Dept., University of MO-St. Louis, 8001 Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63121. Call Bette to volunteer to help with convention registration; call Paul Bauer, H# 921-3972, to help escort local field trips. Volunteers may get free passes to convention sessions & social events.

WGNSS Meeting on Columbia Bottoms — *Friday, April 10*, at 8 pm. Tom Leiffield & Mike Arduser of MO Conservation Dept. will present info. & ask for input on Columbia Bottoms management. Meeting to be held in east meeting room of St. Louis County Library headquarters on Lindbergh Blvd. across from Plaza Frontenac. See related article on page 4.

Wings of Spring — *Sunday, April 19*, at Riverlands. Sponsored by Corps of Engineers. In St. Charles Co. near Alton, IL. Take Hwy 367 north of I-270, across Missouri River to right on last road before Mississippi River. Go east from gas station; turn right on first road to Teal Pond parking lot. For more info., call Julie Ziino at 899-2600.

St. Louis Earth Day Community Festival — *Saturday & Sunday, May 16 & 17*. Held at Tower Grove Park with shuttle service to MO Botanical Garden's Ridgeway Center for exhibits. St. Louis Audubon will participate through Migratory Bird Discovery Day exhibits in Ridgeway Center. For more info. on Earth Day events, call Jerry Klamon at 776-4442.

Butterfly Counts — *Saturdays, May 16 & June 20*. Another main count to be held on September 5. Counts held at 5 different locations with different coordinators; call coordinator to volunteer. See related article on page 4.

Shaw Arboretum Native Plant Conference — *Friday - Sunday, June 5 to 7*, at Powder Valley Nature Center. Cosponsored by Shaw Arboretum of MO Botanical Garden & MO Conservation Dept. Conference is designed to increase awareness & interest in use of native plants in the landscape. Goal is to develop an understanding of natural landscaping through balance of classroom lectures & hands-on, outdoor workshops. Gardeners, horticulturists, environmental educators, landscape designers, plant nuts, & the like can all benefit. Conference will be limited to first 300 registrants. Registration is required. Please contact Shaw Arboretum to register, 314/451-3512.

Missouri Botanical Garden Opens Early for Birders

In an effort to promote bird watching, the Missouri Botanical Garden will open at 7 am on Thursday mornings, April 23 through May 14, for members of invited nature study/bird watching organizations. The Garden is inviting members of St. Louis Audubon Society and WGNSS for these special mornings, allowing them access to the Garden before it opens to the general public at 9 am. This early opening will not be publicized to the general public.

For St. Louis Audubon Society members to take advantage of this opportunity, they need only show proof of current membership in the organization, and they will be given free admission between 7 and 9 am on these Thursdays.

The diversity of habitats at the Missouri Botanical Garden attract a wide variety of birds, especially in the English Woodland Garden and areas with water features. It is hoped that Auduboners will enjoy this unusual opportunity to visit the Garden during this special time for early morning birding. If you have any questions about this opportunity, please call Lydia Toth, manager of educational services, at 451-5312.

Join WGNSS to Discuss Columbia Bottoms Management

by Sue Gustafson

The Webster Groves Nature Study Society (WGNSS) invites the members of St. Louis Audubon to its April general meeting on Friday, April 10, at which Tom Leifield of the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) will make a presentation on the newly acquired 4,800-acre conservation area at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

Tom will provide information about Columbia Bottoms and, most importantly, will be asking for our input and suggestions on how MDC can manage this area to attract a diversity of bird life. We envision using this area as frequently as we use Busch Conservation Area, Riverlands, and Horseshoe Lake as one of our prime birding locations for field trips.

We are pleased that MDC is asking for our input. Mike Arduser (of MDC and a member of Audubon's board of directors) will be assisting Tom with the presentation.

Please join WGNSS on Friday, April 10, at 8 pm in the east meeting room of the St. Louis County Library headquarters on Lindbergh across from Plaza Frontenac.

Join the 1998 Butterfly Counts

by Bill Brandhorst

This will be the sixth year butterfly counts have been conducted in Missouri. There are 14 areas where these counts are now being done across the state. St. Louis has 5 of them. They are open to the public, but if you plan to attend, please call the leader to let him know you plan on coming and to check on details such as lunch and a time and place to meet.

At each area there are 3 main counts a year; a fourth one is scheduled for the leaders in the less pleasant weather in April. The dates of these counts could vary, so your phone check is important.

The Saturday dates of the main counts are:

May 16

June 20

September 5

We now have 5-year counts at several places. We have found and are now expecting some variations in the count numbers from year to year. Monarch numbers appear to be down yet though. The number of species has not varied much. Occasionally, a new species is noticed.

While the main reason for doing the butterfly counts is to watch for change and, if present, to search for the cause, the count does get people into natural surroundings, and the butterflies are beautiful. Seeing them where they live makes us want to preserve them and thus their habitat.

On a count the members gather and set off on repeatable routes to make the count. Usually, butterflies in a corridor 40 feet wide are the only ones counted. They should not be counted twice.

Children old enough to swing a net (8 years is about the youngest limit) thoroughly enjoy the count. Catching a butterfly brings it up close and does not harm it if handled carefully and released.

Busch Conservation Area—

Bill Brandhorst, coordinator, 965-7269

Cuivre River State Park—

Bruce Shuette, coordinator, 528-7247

Powder Valley Nature Center—

Doug Jackson, coordinator, 301-1500

Valley View Glade—

Marshall Magner, coordinator, 961-4588

Victoria Glade—

George Winkler, coordinator, 993-1652

Again, please check in with the appropriate coordinator if you plan to volunteer. Thanks.

Spring is on the Way . . .

from page 1

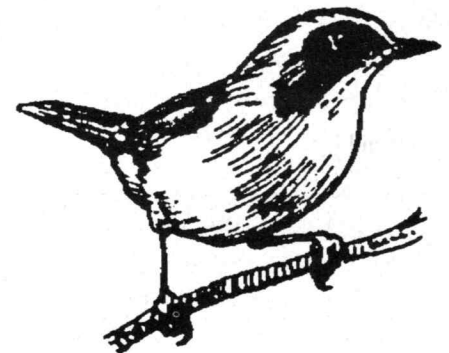
early shorebirds, barred owls, and, of course, woodcock display flights are always worth the trip. This year the woodcocks have already been "peenting" up a storm in March, so we should have a good outing.

In May, spring migration is fully underway, with the peak numbers of warblers and many of the perching birds occurring at mid-month. This month we have scheduled several birding trips to the local hot spots, and a special day trip to a prime Missouri location. The International Migratory Bird Week Celebration will be held May 2 through May 10 this year. The St. Louis Audubon Society will host a bird walk at the Shaw Arboretum on May 2 and, once again, several bird walks in Kennedy Forest. Last year, more than 60 birders participated in each of these popular walks at the Forest Park, and no one went away disappointed. This year's walks will be held on May 3 and 10 and will meet behind the Art Museum as usual. We hope to see you there!

The last local St. Louis bird trip of the year will be at Castlewood State Park on May 23. This is a very special time of year at Castlewood where we are likely to see nesting prothonotary warblers, cerulean warblers, fish crows, yellow-throated warblers, and any number of other migrating birds. Even Mississippi kites are possible in this area as are red-shouldered hawks, which have already paired off in preparation for nesting.

The remaining birding trip of the spring is a day trip to Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area near Jefferson City on May 16. This is a well known Missouri location for migrating shorebirds and forest specialties. If you are interested in a day trip at this time, you should contact Jim Malone at 536-1119 for the trip meeting place and other details.

We hope to see you on our birding trips this spring, but even if you don't come out with us, be sure to get out on your own and see birds!



The Conservation Corner

Campaign for Page Avenue Referendum is Overwhelming Success

by Jim Holsen

St. Louis County residents demonstrated that they want a referendum on the County's legislation ceding the right-of-way across Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park for the Page Avenue extension. In 55 days, 36,016 valid signatures were obtained on petitions calling for the referendum. This is 56 percent more than the required number of 23,086 signatures, a great feat for the petitioners, considering that they had to contend with winter weather and the holiday season.

The petition drive for the referendum was supported, as in the past, by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, the Sierra Club, the Open Space Council, and St. Louis Audubon. A new factor in the campaign this year was support from the St. Louis County Municipal League and from 2 church groups: Churches United for Community Action and Metropolitan Churches United for St. Louis. The Municipal League and the churches changed the nature of the campaign, adding concerns for urban sprawl and the loss of established neighborhoods and businesses to earlier concerns for the loss of park areas and wildlife habitat.

This issue will be on the November 3 ballot. In the meantime, the campaign partners will concentrate on getting a moratorium on further construction, keeping the issue in the public eye, and raising funds for the final months before the election. Joan Bray, state legislator from University City, has already introduced a bill in the Missouri General Assembly calling for a moratorium, but its prospects are uncertain at best.

Serious, well financed opposition is expected from supporters of the highway extension.

Roger Pryor of the Coalition for the Environment has reported that "on March 6, Maryland Governor Parris Glendening reversed his longtime support for a proposed intercounty connector highway, called the ICC. The \$1.1 billion project has been in the works for nearly 50 years. Glendening said that the highway should not be built and suggested that there are alternatives to relieve traffic congestion between Montgomery and Prince George Counties."

"In a courageous move, the governor angered business groups when he announced his decision. He cited environmental concerns and increasing urban sprawl as his reasons." This story has a familiar ring.

Visit Your State Legislator on Lobby Day

by Jim Holsen

Lobby Day this year is Wednesday, April 22. Environmental groups will gather in the rotunda of the State Capitol at 11 am to be inspired by their leaders and by environmentally minded senators and representatives. Our legislative liaison representatives will summarize the status of environmental bills—those we support as well as those we oppose. A good time is had by all. Cheers and slogans rising from the floor of the rotunda remind our legislators that environmental bills have grass roots support. Often the governor drops by to say hello.

Important issues this year are a safe drinking water bill, wood chip mills, the Page Avenue extension, regulations for industrial farms, environmental justice, clean air reform, and campaign finance reform. After gathering in the rotunda, visitors have an opportunity to visit with their own legislators and to attend floor sessions of the 2 houses, or to sit in on hearings of selected bills.

This is part of the legislative process—letting

students—offering them a unique experience which others should consider.

Participants who wish to travel by bus should gather at the far north end of the parking lot of the Ethical Society, on Clayton Road, at 8 am. The round trip by bus costs \$20 (\$5 for students). Reservations must be made by April 17. Call the Missouri Coalition for the Environment at 727-0600 for information and reservations, or Jim Holsen at 822-0410 for information on Audubon's activities. Participants who prefer to drive to Jefferson City should allow about 2 1/2 hours each way. Bring your lunch, or eat in the cafeteria in the Capitol. (It is not a fancy one.)

Savanna Areas Planned for Perimeter of Kennedy Woods

by Jim Holsen

"The first five miles of our road laid through a beautiful high level and fertile prairie which encircles the town of St. Louis." This is what Meriwether Lewis wrote in his journal on May 20, 1804. And there is much more evidence to show that in those years large parts of Missouri were not dense forest, but open savanna areas, with prairie grasses growing between scattered and dispersed trees.

At the March 3 meeting of the Audubon board, Ken Cohen, a past president of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment and active member of Citizens to Protect Forest Park, described plans to create savanna areas on the north and west edges of what is now known as Kennedy Woods, the heavily forested area in the southwest corner of Forest Park. The proposal to create savannas with prairie grasses, sedges and wild flowers blends in a matrix of native plants. The plan will add diverse habitat to an area that is already one of the best for finding warblers and other neotropical species during the spring and fall migration seasons.

The Missouri Prairie Foundation, the Open Space Council, and the Webster Groves Nature Study Society have already given appreciable funds to get this program underway. St. Louis Audubon, for many years a supporter of Citizens to Protect Forest Park, will consider adding its

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD CELEBRATION ACTIVITIES

MAY 2 - MAY 16, 1998

The following is a listing of the special events that are happening around the St. Louis area in conjunction with International Migratory Bird Week. Some of the programs listed here require reservations. To obtain more information on a specific program or to make reservations, please refer to numbers listed within the event descriptions or to the sponsoring organizations listed after the events. Except as noted, all programs listed are free of charge.

Saturday, May 2

8 am

BIRDING AT THE ARBORETUM

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON

WEBSTER GROVES NATURE STUDY SOCIETY

Meet at the gatehouse of Missouri Botanical Garden's Shaw Arboretum in Gray Summit. Gray Summit is along I-44, approximately 23 miles west of the I-44/I-270 intersection. There is a fee of \$3 per person for those who are not members of the Garden or who are not in a party with a Garden member. The Arboretum offers varied habitats, from prairie to mature upland woods and lower wet woodlands along the Meramec River. This will be the time to find warblers and other spring migrants. Bring binoculars and field guide. No reservation required; call Jim Malone, H# 536-1119, for information. Ages 10 and up and adults welcome. Help provided for beginners.

Sunday, May 3

8 am

BIRDING IN KENNEDY WOODS

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON

WEBSTER GROVES NATURE STUDY SOCIETY

Kennedy Woods in Forest Park is one of the best places in the area to observe warblers and other spring migrants. New trails provided by the MO Conservation Dept. make this area more accessible to groups. Meet near the open woods behind the Art Museum. Bring binoculars and field guide. Help provided for beginners. No reservations required; call Jim Malone, H# 536-1119, for more information. Ages 10 and up and adults welcome.

Sunday, May 10

8 am

BIRDING IN KENNEDY WOODS

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON

WEBSTER GROVES NATURE STUDY SOCIETY

This second visit to Kennedy Woods in Forest Park should be at about the peak of the spring migration. Meet in the open woods behind the Art Museum. Bring binoculars and field guide. Help provided for beginners. No reservations required; call Jim Malone, H# 536-1119, for more information. Ages 10 and up and adults welcome.

Saturday, May 16

10 am - 5 pm

MIGRATORY BIRD DISCOVERY DAY AT THE MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

ST. LOUIS ZOO

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON

WILD BIRD REHABILITATION

This year Migratory Bird Discovery Day will be held in conjunction with the St. Louis Earth Day Community Festival. Activities and demonstrations will feature bird identification, where to look for birds, and the do's and don'ts of backyard bird feeding, among other topics. Come to the Ridgeway Center of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Shuttle bus service will be available from the main site of Earth Day exhibits in Tower Grove Park. Stop by at any time during the hours listed. Call Jim Holsen, H# 822-0410, for more information.

Saturday, May 16

8 am

BIRDING AT THE EAGLE BLUFFS CONSERVATION AREA

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON
WEBSTER GROVES NATURE STUDY SOCIETY

This is a 1-day field trip to the Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area along the north shore of the Missouri River in Boone County, southwest of Columbia. Eagle Bluffs is the largest wetland area in the country that uses treated municipal wastewater to supplement wetland water needs. Bring lunch, binoculars, and field guide. No reservations required; call Jim Malone, H# 536-1119, for location of meeting place and additional information.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Saturday, April 25

2 pm

WILD BIRD RELEASE

WORLD BIRD SANCTUARY

The World Bird Sanctuary plans to release 2 red-tailed hawks and perhaps 1 mature male bald eagle at its Office of Wildlife Learning at Lone Elk County Park. Special education programs will be held the same day at 11 am and 1 and 2 pm, also in Lone Elk Park. Call Pat Gillett at 938-6193 for more information.

Friday, June 12

10 am Kickoff

DEDICATION OF RIVERLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL DEMONSTRATION AREA (EDA)

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
RIVERS PROJECT OFFICE

The Riverlands EDA at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam near Alton, Illinois, is a 1,200-acre tract of wetland prairie along the Mississippi River, a haven for the millions of ducks and shorebirds that use the Mississippi flyway. From I-270 in north St. Louis County, take Hwy 367, which later becomes Hwy 67, north to Alton. Turn right into Riverlands at the FISCA service station, just before the approach to the Clark Bridge over the Mississippi River. For more information, call Julie Ziino at 899-2600, ext. 231.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD WEEK SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area
Call Busch Conservation Area at 441-4554

St. Louis Audubon Society
Call Jim Holsen at 822-0410

Webster Groves Nature Study Society
Call Sue Gustafson at 968-8128

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center
Call 301-1500

St. Louis Zoo, Forest Park
Call 768-5466 for Zoo Programs Information

Wild Bird Rehabilitation, Inc.
Call 984-9116

Rockwoods Reservation
Call 458-2236

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District
Call 899-2600

Wild Bird Centers (Crestwood & Creve Coeur)
Wild Birds Unlimited Stores
Wild Bird Marketplace
(Some stores may sponsor birding walks or other events.)

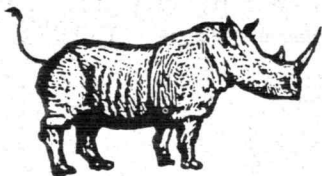
As we go to press, the Missouri Department of Conservation (Busch Conservation Area, Powder Valley Nature Center, and Rockwoods Reservation) does not have its activity schedule completed. Call numbers given under sponsoring organizations for up-to-date information.

St. Louis Audubon 1998 AdventureTrips

KENYA/TANZANIA, GALAPAGOS/ECUADOR, UGANDA



In 1998 the St. Louis Audubon Society is offering 3 different foreign adventures. Each trip offers unique experiences to exceptional wildlife destinations. Read each summary below, request an itinerary, and plan to join in the stunning adventure.



KENYA: June 8-21 (14 days), plus TANZANIA and WESTERN KENYA options. All at prime breeding time for birds. Guide has 30+ years birding experience in East Africa. You visit 7 national parks and game reserves and have superior accommodations throughout at 5 different lodges. Expect over 300 species of birds during your basic trip and about 45 species of animals. Many of these will be at "point blank" range for photographs. OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS include: 1) a 7-day pre-trip visit to TANZANIA that departs June 2, where you spend 2 days each at 3 national parks including famed Ngorongoro Crater, Africa's Garden of Eden; 2) a 7-day post-trip extension that returns June 28, where you experience 4 special birding regions not encountered on the basic trip. These include Kakamega Rainforest Reserve, unique in Kenya; Lake Baringo, a freshwater lake in the Rift

Valley; Saiwa Swamp National Park; and Delamere's private camp on Lake Elementeita. The same experienced birding guide will also be used for both extensions.

GALAPAGOS CRUISE: September 20-29 (10 days). You join our 8-day cruise aboard the air-conditioned, 48-passenger ship, *M/V Corinthian*, and explore 10 islands and experience numerous unique birds and animals in massive abundance that are tame beyond your belief. All cabins have air conditioning, private facilities, and outside facing windows. OPTIONAL EXTENSION for 8 days to mainland Ecuador: You visit 3 very different altitude regions of the Andes highlands to witness numerous species of hummingbirds and tanagers at each altitude and to discover hundreds of birds in Ecuador. Returns on October 7.

UGANDA: November 12-25 (14 days). Called the "Pearl of Africa," Uganda is lush green, has extensive luxuriant forests, and is exciting and little explored by tourists. You will thrill to an hour-long safe but very close encounter with an entire family of mountain gorillas and view many other unusual primates, plus experience exceptional birding and view many big game animals typical of East Africa during visits to the following 3 national parks: Queen Elizabeth

(Rwenzori), Kabale Forest, and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Limited to 10 persons. OPTIONAL EXTENSION for 4 days to Murchison Falls returns November 29. Same guide as used for our Kenya trips, with 30+ years of birding experience in all of East Africa, is also used for this basic trip and the extension in Uganda.

REQUEST A DETAILED COLOR ITINERARY FOR ANY OF THESE TRIPS:

- *Get all of the particulars and start planning your special adventure now.
- *Each of these trips is a unique and exceptional wildlife adventure.
- *Each trip is well designed to see a maximum of birds and wildlife at a relaxed pace so that your adventure will be the memory to treasure a lifetime.

CALL: PAUL BAUER at 314/921-3972

WRITE: ST. LOUIS AUDUBON TRIPS
P.O. BOX 2085
FLORISSANT, MO 63032

May 14 Meeting Highlights Ecuador and Uganda Trips — See Related Article on Page 1

Birds Versus Skyscrapers

by Lynne Breakstone

The January-February issue of *Audubon* magazine (p. 23) included a small article about a program in Toronto called FLAP, the Fatal Light Awareness Program. It seems that Toronto has a sizeable number of bird-kills during migratory periods due to skyscrapers which remain lit at night.

According to FLAP, "During their spring and fall migrations, many birds rely in part on the positions of the moon and the constellations to guide them. But while flying across cities, particularly when it's overcast, they are often drawn to lights shining from skyscrapers. Many of the birds slam into windows and die. Others, dazed or unconscious, drop to the city pave-

ment below—only to be eaten by scavengers or swept up by street cleaners before the first office workers arrive. Every year at least 100 million birds die after colliding with skyscrapers or other manmade structures."

The important question is: Do St. Louis skyscrapers take as high a toll on migrating birds as this Toronto-based program (in conjunction with the World Wildlife Fund) seems to have discovered? Before we assume an affirmative answer, some type of research needs to be done, ideally directed by a biostatistician. If any of our readers fits into this

category and is interested in the project, please let us know.

I am an Audubon board member, and until a qualified statistician or scientist can be found to do scientifically valid surveying, I am requesting volunteers to accompany me to downtown sites at daybreak during the peak of spring migration to see if we do actually find dead or dazed birds at the base of high-rise buildings. Although it may not qualify as valid scientific data, it is a place to begin. FLAP has supplied us with informational materials, which I would gladly share with anyone interested. Volunteers should call Lynne Breakstone, H# 726-4772.

ANNUAL DINNER RESERVATION FORM
ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL DINNER

Reservation requests must be returned by Friday, April 17.

THURSDAY, APRIL 23
CASH BAR: 6:30 pm
DINNER: 7:30 pm

SPEAKER:
RON KLATASKE
NAS Regional Vice Pres.

AGUSTI'S RESTAURANT
2300 EDWARDS ST.
ST. LOUIS, MO

Please reserve _____ places at \$16 each for the Annual Dinner.
My check payable to the **St. Louis Audubon Society** is enclosed.

Please reserve _____ chicken parmigiana dinner(s) and/or _____ pasta primavera dinner(s).

Please complete information below, including phone number. You will receive a call confirming your reservation.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Mail this form & check to:

Mary Lou Miller

3927 Lucas & Hunt Rd.

St. Louis, MO 63121

**St. Louis Audubon Goes
Online . . . No, Really**

by Jim Malone

Since the St. Louis Audubon Society received a donated computer a couple of years ago, it has been a dream of the board to use this new technology (well, new to the Society) to find better ways to serve our existing members and to seek out new ones. We all agreed that the most effective way to do this was to generate a website on the Internet and to provide information about the Society and birding in St. Louis. It has been a slow process involving a great deal of learning, but we are finally up and running!

The St. Louis Audubon Society website is located within the National Audubon Society site in the chapters section. To go directly to the site, use the following address:

<http://www.audubon.org/chapter/mo/SLAS/>.
This address will take you to our home page, which you can use to access all of the other information in the site.

Presently, the SLAS website contains information about the board of directors, a complete calendar of monthly activities, birding trips, special events, St. Louis birding resources, and an abbreviated version of *Tale Feathers*

from the last few months. The site also contains information about the latest international trips sponsored by SLAS and information about conservation issues important to St. Louis Audubon. The birding resources pages contain a bird list for the St. Louis area, information about birding locations in and around St. Louis, links to SLAS birding trips, transcriptions of the Tyson Nature Line, and information about where to find our local birding specialty, the Eurasian tree sparrow.

Presently, there are no graphics or links to other sites, but these are some of the items which we hope to add in the coming weeks. We also need your help in the form of suggestions for things that you would like to see in the site. If you have ideas or just want to drop us a line, our e-mail address is **stlaud@inlink.com**. So, if you are out there surfing the net, drop in once in a while to see how we are doing, and let us know what you think.

**Forest Park
Natural Resource
Inventory Completed**

The 1997 Natural Resource Inventory of the Forest Park Linear Water System reveals that the natural linear water system is highly degraded. Studies were conducted on the amphibians, reptiles, macroinvertebrates, birds, and vascular plants along the Park's ponds and remnant stream system by biologists Dave Tylka, Randy Korotev, Brent Kuhl, Sam McCord, and Alan Brant.

Habitat degradation, stream fragmentation, and water pollution have reduced natural populations of native species. Pollution-tolerant and aggressive, disturbance-oriented species generally dominate the water bodies. The populations of both amphibians and reptiles have decreased 57 percent over the last fifty years.

This data will be used to help achieve the goals of the Forest Park Master Plan and restore the natural flowing water system in the Park. For information about obtaining a copy of the report, call Anabeth Calkins, manager of Forest Park, at 535-0100.

What Kinda Hummingbird are You Going to See in Winter . . . Anyway?

By Jim Malone

Late this last fall when Faith Phillips must have entertained thoughts of retiring her hummingbird feeder for the season, I'm sure she had no idea that it would still be hanging outside the kitchen window of her Des Peres home past Christmas. A steady stream of late season hummers kept Mrs. Phillips busy filling the feeder well into October, when ruby-throated hummingbirds in this part of the country have usually moved to friendlier climates for the winter.

As November went by, it was obvious that 1 bird simply was not leaving, and Faith began to worry about its future. She read everything she could find about hummingbirds, called local bird rescue organizations, and contacted the St. Louis Audubon Society to see if she should be doing something else to protect the bird from a particularly cool snap after Thanksgiving.

Unfortunately, the only advice anyone gave her was to continue feeding the hummingbird, and eventually it would probably leave on its own, assuming that the bird in question was a ruby-throated hummingbird. When she finally convinced us to look at the bird, we found she had an immature male Anna's hummingbird coming to the feeder. This was the first time this species was ever recorded in the St. Louis area, and for good reason—they don't migrate! Normally, Anna's hummingbirds are found along the western seaboard, spending their summers in higher elevations and moving into the lowlands for the winter. Obviously, this youngster didn't read the training manual and decided on a little late fall trip!

In the process of trying to find anyone familiar with this bird and ways to handle it, I came across a wonderful hummingbird site on the Internet (www.derived.com/hummers/frames/welcome.html). After a bit of digging, I found that the site was managed by Lanny Chambers in Fenton, Missouri, who was an important asset to answering our questions about the hummer. Lanny contacted a licensed hummingbird bander and rehabilitator in Missouri, and it looked as if we might be able to trap the bird and move it to a safer location (like a greenhouse) for the remainder of the winter.

As fate would have it, just when we had the beginnings of a rescue plan in place, the bird had fattened up on numbers of flying insects

which hatched around Christmas during a particularly mild spell and flew on—never to return.

Of the many things I learned from this experience, I think what most impressed me was the measures that hummingbird lovers from several points across the country (who learned about our little visitor on the Internet) were willing to undertake to save this bird. I would like to thank Faith Phillips and Lanny Chambers for all of their efforts on behalf of the Anna's hummingbird and Bill Rowe for the personal photographs of the bird he made available for Faith Phillips.

Attracting the Eurasian Tree Sparrow

by Bill Groth

The Eurasian tree sparrow (actually a weaver finch) has been around St. Louis since 1870 when a Mr. Kleinschmidt and Mr. Daenzer released 20 of them in Lafayette Park. Since the sexes are similar in appearance, it is fortunate that both males and females were released.

Southside residents soon put out bird houses which were readily used. I have not found a description of these houses other than a recommended opening of 1 1/8 inches. The population flourished until the arrival of their cousins, the house sparrow, about 1878. The house sparrow is much more aggressive, and soon the tree sparrows were scattered.

In the 1950's, Channing Horner, a University City High School student, determined that the tree sparrow could and would use a bird house that had an opening of 1 inch. House sparrows, house finches, and starlings can or will not use an opening this small.

The Eurasian is a social bird and prefers several of his kind close by. For more than 30 years, I have been successful in attracting nesting Eurasians by having at least 5 wren houses hanging close together. All boxes are used, and they usually have 2 or 3 broods a year. They do have some competition from the very aggressive house wren. House wrens will also take over wren houses occupied by chickadees, throwing out eggs and young.

If you want to try and attract the trim Eurasian tree sparrow to your yard, hang at least 5 or 6 wren houses (or gourds with 1-inch holes) close together. As they are already pairing up, you may not have good luck this year, but just keep trying.



The Education Corner

Teachers Off to Camp

by Julie Leemann

The St. Louis Audubon Society awards committee has selected 2 camp scholarship recipients for 1998. The recipients, who will attend an Audubon ecology camp this summer, are Mary Milner and Sandra Thiele.

Mary and Sandra both work at St. Bernadette School. Mary teaches 4th and 5th grades while Sandra teaches the junior high students. They will both be attending the ecology camp in Wyoming. Mary and Sandra are eager to use the knowledge they obtain at the camp to enrich the science and ecology programs for their students.

Help to Add More Nature to Cable TV

by Lynne Breakstone

The Outdoor Life Network is a cable program devoted to outdoor recreation, wildlife, wilderness conservation, and adventure. It recently contacted St. Louis Audubon because the network is not presently carried on St. Louis cable.

A demonstration video which the network sent had 2 very well done segments on birds: 1 about winter owls in Canada and 1 about efforts to support bald eagle nesting in Arizona. It was my opinion that these video segments were interesting, informative, and quite "personal" in the way they had been programmed. At a recent Audubon board meeting, several board members said that they had seen Outdoor Life Network programs in other cities and that they had been favorably impressed.

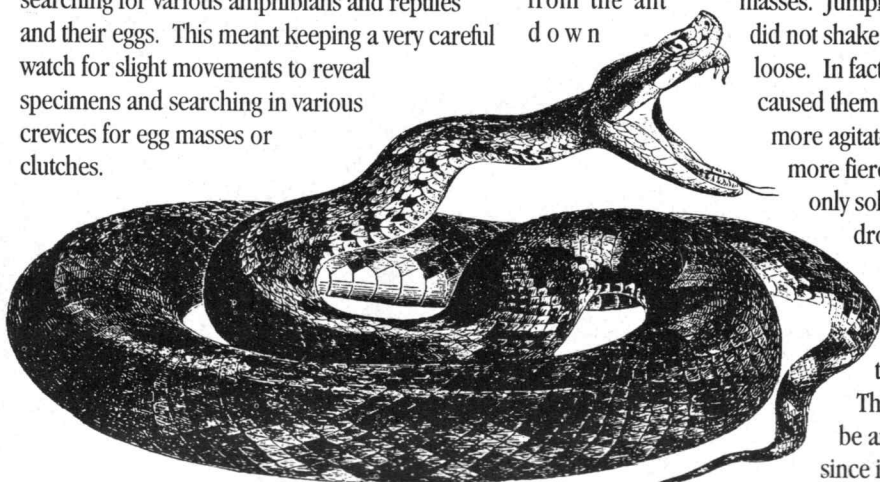
Therefore, we are suggesting to Audubon members that if you would like to see more variety in our local nature-oriented cable programming, please contact your cable providers and urge them to have the Outdoor Life Network added to your basic cable line-up. For more information on this network, call 1-800-OUTDOOR.

An Encounter in Panama

by Ed Ortleb

During the summer of 1967, I was conducting some research in the Republic of Panama. This was part of an on-going tropical rainforest project headed by Owen Sexton of Washington University and funded by the National Science Foundation. My work focused specifically on amphibians and reptiles. The major portion of the work was done at the Smithsonian-operated field station located on Barro Colorado Island in the Canal Zone.

I spent most of my daylight working hours searching for various amphibians and reptiles and their eggs. This meant keeping a very careful watch for slight movements to reveal specimens and searching in various crevices for egg masses or clutches.



One day my attention was diverted by an unusual sound. It was very melodious and resembled a soft trill and flute-like whistle. I recalled that someone at the lab had described the call of the tinamou, a grouse-sized bird, as being a singularly melodious, melancholy call. Since this is a ground-dwelling bird and has inconspicuous coloration, I knew that spotting the tinamou in the dim light of the rainforest was going to be difficult.

However, I was determined to sneak up on the bird and perhaps even photograph it.

I walked a few paces, stopped and listened to the call, walked a few more steps, and stopped to listen again. I seemed to be getting nearer. A few more steps were taken, and I froze. There seemed to be some movement in the brush ahead. Almost immediately, I felt a series of hot pinpricks on my legs. I looked down and to my horror discovered my legs were covered with army ants. I had stepped right into the middle of a moving column, and a goodly number of the ants were climbing up my legs. The first thing was to get away, and I leaped several meters away from the ant masses. Jumping up and did not shake the ants loose. In fact, I believe it caused them to become more agitated and bite more fiercely. The only solution was to drop all my gear and remove my trousers. This would not be an easy job since it involved getting the trousers over my boots and doing this in a hurry. Hurry I did and quickly brushed the ants off my legs and thighs. I was glad to be rid of the pests. It then occurred to me what a funny situation I was in. There I was standing immodestly in the middle of the forest with no trousers, and the afternoon thundershower was starting. I laughed, dressed quickly, and gathered up my gear to continue my work.

The tinamou was, of course, long gone, having fled from the antics of a leaping, jumping herpetologist. This experience taught me 2 valuable lessons: 1) While hunting, capturing, and handling such creatures as coral snakes, fer-de-lance, and poison arrow frogs can be dangerous, bird watching is not without peril; and 2) herpetologists should stick to looking for the creeping and crawling creatures and not let their attention be diverted by melodic calls from feathered creatures.

Audubon Volunteers Help at Channel 9 Pledge Drive

On Tuesday evening, March 10, 6 members from St. Louis Audubon helped to answer the telephones during the March pledge drive for KETC-TV (Channel 9). Thanks to the following volunteers:

Tom Day
Mary Dueren
Jim Holsen
Arthur Montgomery
Ed Ortleb
John Solodar

These pledge drives provide a pleasant evening and some publicity for St. Louis Audubon. Anyone who would like to participate in a future pledge drive should contact Lynne Breakstone, H# 726-4772.

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Check the membership category desired:

<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Introductory/\$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/\$35
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<input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Citizen Family/\$23	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting/\$100
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Citizen/\$21

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Send application to:

Mrs. Katherine Chambers, Membership Chairperson
St. Louis Audubon Society 7XCH8
7024 Forsyth
St. Louis, MO 63105

Make membership checks payable to:
National Audubon Society

If you wish to make a donation to the local chapter, please write a separate check to:
St. Louis Audubon Society

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Dave Tylka	Strategic Planning Committee	984-7712

Our Phone Number

To contact the St. Louis Audubon Society, please call (314) 822-6595.

THANK YOU

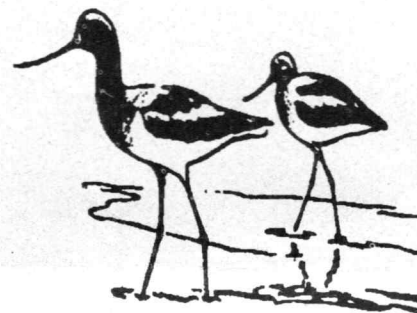
For Donations to the St. Louis Audubon Society:

MRS. WALTER L. METCALF, SR., *in memory of Mrs. William G. Bowling*

Wetlands for Kids Volunteers

Thanks to the following members who helped with the Audubon booth at the Wetlands for Kids event held at Busch Conservation Area on March 14 and sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation:

Jerry Castillon
Bill Groth
Arthur Montgomery
Dale Ponce



Newsletter Information

The St. Louis Audubon Society's *Tale Feathers* is printed bimonthly on recycled paper with soy ink and produced by Dolde Printing Co., 1350 Lonedell Road, Arnold, MO 63010.

Please send any article submissions for the next edition by **June 1, 1998** to Karen Tylka, 3155 Frisco Hill Road, Imperial, MO 63052 (H# 942-3142).



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